

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PETITION FORM

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY FLORIDA REGISTERED VOTERS ONLY SIGN ONLY ONCE

104.185---A person who knowingly signs a petition or petitions for a candidate, a minor political party, or an issue more than one time commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s.775.082 or s.775.083

Title: VOLUNTARY UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

Summary: Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be offered a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity by the state no later than the 2005 school year. This voluntary early childhood development and education program shall be established according to high quality standards and shall be free for all Florida four-year-olds without taking away funds used for existing education, health and development programs.

I am a registered voter of Florida and hereby petition the Secretary of State to place the following amendment to the Florida Constitution on the ballot in the general election.

NAME _____

Please print name as it appears on Voter I.D. Card

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

COUNTY _____

VOTER REGISTRATION NUMBER _____ (OR) DATE OF BIRTH _____

Date Signed

X _____
SIGNATURE OF REGISTERED VOTER

IS THIS A CHANGE OF ADDRESS WITHIN THE SAME COUNTY ONLY FOR VOTER REGISTRATION? ☐ YES ☐ NO

WHEREAS, infancy and early childhood development set the stage for a child's future ability to interact socially and achieve academically, and extensive research on the human brain shows that from birth to age 5 children rapidly develop the language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities upon which child development proceeds. To this end, these critical dimensions must be nurtured in early, high quality, active learning pre-kindergarten programs for all Florida four-year-old children to provide both short and long-term benefits, including later school success.

WHEREAS, it is not advisable to mandate such pre-kindergarten programs for all children, but rather to require such programs to be available to all children who wish to participate therein, and thus to permit the parents, custodian, guardian or other caregiver to make the individual determination on behalf of each of Florida's four-year olds whether to participate therein.

WHEREAS, existing resources of public institutions are limited in their ability to support additional demand, and therefore a range of pre-kindergarten settings, including school sites, childcare facilities and homes, both public and non-public, should house pre-kindergarten programming, so that parents, custodians, guardians, or other caregivers may have choices among school settings, curricula and services in order to preserve their role as the primary protector of the welfare of the children.

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WHEREAS, current available knowledge accepts three primary essentials for school readiness: 1) that children are physically healthy, rested and well nourished; 2) that they are able to communicate needs, wants and thoughts verbally; 3) and that they are enthusiastic and curious in approaching new activities; accordingly, high quality pre-kindergarten programs should reflect an understanding of how children learn by providing appropriate preschool experiences emphasizing basic skills including growth in language, literacy, math concepts, science arts, physical development and personal and social competence.

WHEREAS, current knowledge dictates that a high quality prekindergarten learning opportunity must operate according to standards that require a core curriculum and interactive, age appropriate, individualized programming delivered according to children's unique scheduling needs and which promote and enhance children's feelings of comfort and self-esteem, and further dictates the importance of appropriate staffing ratios, teacher qualifications and professional development, physical environment, and the protection of child health and safety, and therefore, it is necessary to operate the Florida early childhood development and education program according to professionally accepted standards.

WHEREAS, Florida currently has many fine education, development and health care programs that seek to address the needs of children and adults but current resources do not meet the full demand for such programs, and therefore the early childhood education and development program described herein must be implemented in such a way as not to remove any funds from any existing education, development or health care program.

NOW THEREFORE, Article IX, Section 1 of the Florida Constitution is hereby amended to renumber Section 1 as Section 1(a) and to add the following Sections 1(b) and (c):

(b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

(c) The early childhood education and development programs provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds generated in addition to those used for existing education, health, and development programs. Existing education, health, and development programs are those funded by the State as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult education, health care, or development.



Pd. Pol. Adv.
The Committee on Pre-K

For Office Use Only:

Serial Number: 02-01
Date Approved: 1-25-02

RETURN TO: **The Committee on Pre-K**
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